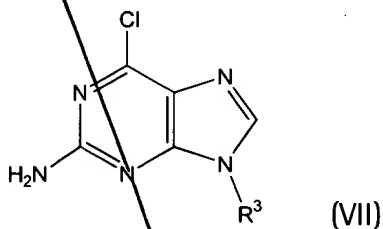


In the Claims:

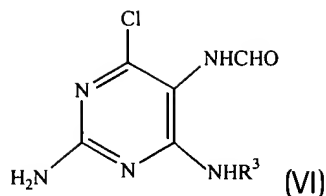
Please cancel claim 5 without prejudice.

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 9 (Twice amended) A process for the preparation of a compound of formula (VII)



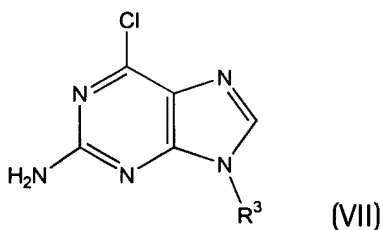
wherein R<sup>3</sup> is hydrogen; hydroxyl or a protected hydroxyl; a C<sub>3-7</sub> carbocyclic group optionally substituted with C<sub>1-4</sub>alkyl, C<sub>1-4</sub>alkoxy, hydroxyl or protected hydroxyl, azido, phosphonyl, or halogen; a C<sub>2-8</sub> hydrocarbyl group, wherein carbon atoms may be substituted by one or more heteroatoms such as N, O or S, and wherein such C<sub>2-8</sub> hydrocarbyl group may be optionally substituted with C<sub>1-4</sub>alkyl, C<sub>1-4</sub>alkoxy, hydroxyl or protected hydroxyl, azido, phosphonyl, or halogen; or a C<sub>4-7</sub> heterocyclic group, wherein at least one carbon atom is replaced by a N, O, or S atom and wherein such C<sub>4-7</sub> heterocyclic group may be optionally substituted with C<sub>1-4</sub>alkyl, C<sub>1-4</sub>alkoxy, hydroxyl or protected hydroxyl, azido, phosphonyl, or halogen; provided that such groups are not attached by a glycosidic bond, [or any group which is not attached by a glycosidic bond,] comprising [ring closure of] reacting a compound of formula (VI)



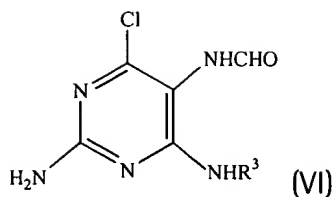
wherein R<sup>3</sup> is [hydrogen or any group which is not attached by a glycosidic bond] as defined above, with a trialkylorthoformate in the presence of an aqueous acid.

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18. (Amended) A process for the preparation of a compound of formula (VII)

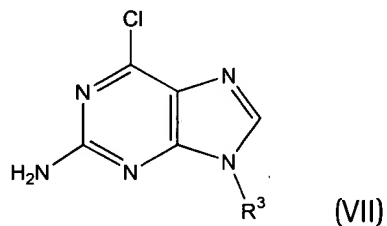


wherein R<sup>3</sup> is a C<sub>3-7</sub> carbocyclic group optionally substituted with C<sub>1-4</sub>alkyl, C<sub>1-4</sub>alkoxy, hydroxyl or protected hydroxyl, azido, phosphonyl, or halogen, a C<sub>2-8</sub> hydrocarbyl group, wherein carbon atoms may be substituted by one or more heteroatoms such as N, O or S and wherein such C<sub>2-8</sub> hydrocarbyl group may be optionally substituted with C<sub>1-4</sub>alkyl, C<sub>1-4</sub>alkoxy, hydroxyl or protected hydroxyl, azido, phosphonyl, or halogen; or a C<sub>4-7</sub> heterocyclic group, wherein at least one carbon atom is replaced by a N, O, or S atom and wherein such C<sub>4-7</sub> heterocyclic group may be optionally substituted with C<sub>1-4</sub>alkyl, C<sub>1-4</sub>alkoxy, hydroxyl or protected hydroxyl, azido, phosphonyl, or halogen provided that such groups are not attached by a glycosidic bond, comprising [ring closure of] reacting a compound of formula (VI)

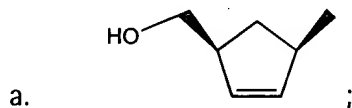


wherein R<sup>3</sup> is [hydrogen or any group which is not attached by a glycosidic bond,] as defined above with a trialkylorthoformate in the presence of an aqueous acid.

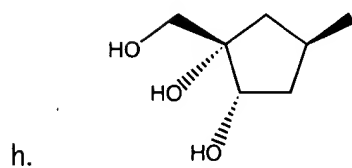
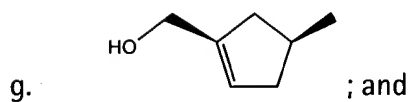
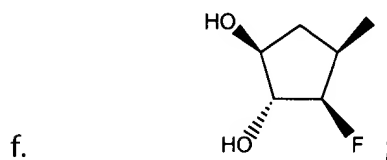
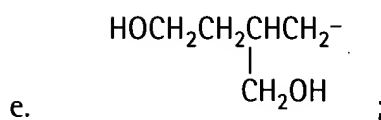
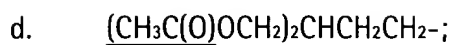
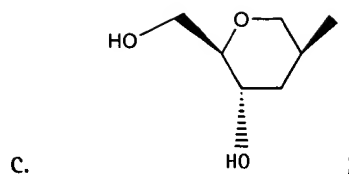
19. A process for the preparation of a compound of formula (VII)



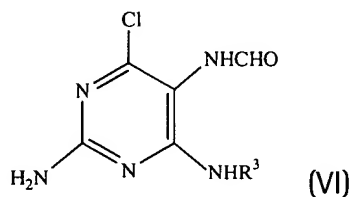
wherein R<sup>3</sup> is selected from:



B<sup>2</sup>

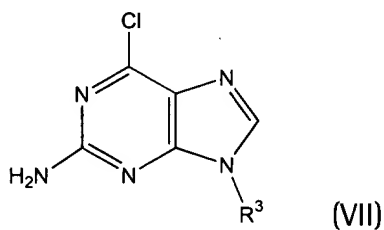


comprising [ring closure of] reacting a compound of formula (VI)

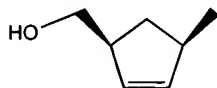


wherein R<sup>3</sup> is [hydrogen or any group which is not attached by a glycosidic bond,] as defined  
above with a trialkylorthoformate in the presence of an aqueous acid.

20. A process for the preparation of a compound of formula (VII)



wherein R<sup>3</sup> is



comprising [ring closure of] reacting a compound of formula (VI)